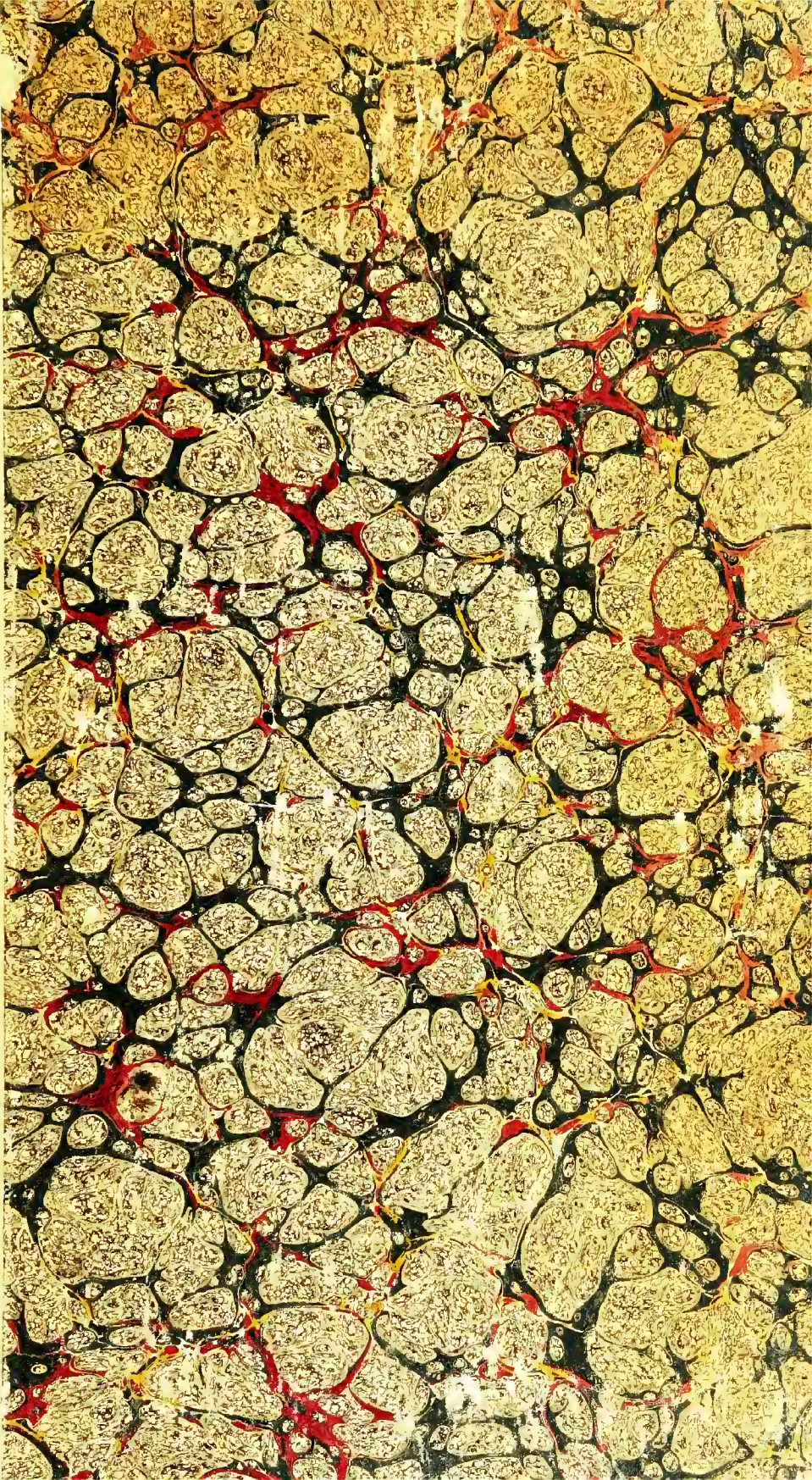


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The United States and Russia: Their Historical Relations.



By

OSCAR S. STRAUS

Member of the Permanent Court
of Arbitration at The Hague



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THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA: THEIR HISTORICAL RELATIONS.

BY OSCAR S. STRAUS, MEMBER OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION AT THE HAGUE.

NAPOLEON said: "History is a fiction agreed upon." This definition is more applicable to diplomatic history than to any branch of the science, for the reason that diplomacy has so many undercurrents whose sources are concealed from the public eye. It is, doubtless, due to the Machiavellian spirit which guided the diplomacy of nations for so many years that, even in the most authoritative histories, we so often find the accounts of diplomatic relations given, not as they were, but as the adroit schemers intended they should appear.

The Kishineff massacres which took place in April, 1903, caused a mighty storm of protest to arise in this country. These protests, voiced by pulpit, press and mass meetings, were resented by the Russian Ambassador at Washington and by the official classes in St. Petersburg, on the plea that the United States was under repeated obligations of gratitude to Russia because of her "traditional friendship" for us, from the very beginning of our national history until the present time. Many articles appeared in the daily papers referring to this "traditional friendship," and urging that the American public should at least refrain from siding with the enemies of Russia, however appalling might be the rule of the Russian bureaucracy. An article appeared in the leading Russian paper of St. Petersburg, the "*Novoe Vremya*," headed "Russia in America," as follows:

"The United States from time to time enters the arena of anti-Russian propaganda which finds favorable soil in its politically unripe population, without government traditions, and carried away by the successes of its new imperialistic policy. The Siberian prisons, the

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

Manchurian open door, the Kishineff disorders—all of these serve as pretexts for the anti-Russian meetings so advantageous to Russia's enemies, while Secretary Hay's stubborn Anglophilism lends governmental importance to the claims of the various groups of American traders and missionaries in the Far East . . . The Russian Foreign Office should publish in English a sketch of the relations between the Russian and American governments, beginning with the time of Catharine and ending with the Spanish-American war."

When the Monarch was the State, and when the Monarch's attachments, antagonisms or desire for revenge were the controlling factors in international relations, the ruler's commands were supreme, and the national conscience had to bend to his will. But, even if the traditional Russian claim upon the gratitude of the United States were well founded, the enlightened spirit of our age could not recognize that as a plea in bar against our condemnation of shocking wrongs, or against our withholding our sympathies for the oppressed.

International relations among modern States are primarily based, not upon sentiment or gratitude, but upon self-interests, modified more or less by a sense of justice and right. However, we are not here concerned with speculations, but with historical facts. Let us see what these facts are.

CATHARINE II AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

Under Catharine II, a scheme was formed in 1779, when we were in the most trying period of our Revolution, for Russia's giving George III effective assistance against us, on condition that the English should aid Russia in renewed attacks upon the Turks. A part of this programme was, that the Island of Minorca was to be ceded by England to Russia as a station for the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean, and as a rendezvous for the insurgent Greeks. This project was drawn up by Catharine's chief adviser, Count Potemkin, for presentation to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg; but, through the adroitness of Count Panin, Catharine's Minister for Foreign Affairs, who favored the French interest as against the English, the scheme fell through, thereby causing the Empress to adopt the anti-British policy of armed neutrality. The nature of Russia's friendship for us at this period, when we were most in need of the friendly offices of foreign nations, is disclosed by Benjamin Franklin, who was then in Paris as one of our Commissioners to negotiate peace with

THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA.

Great Britain. He describes with what friendly satisfaction Russia had learned of the recognition of our independence by the States General of Holland. I quote from his journal:*

“This day” (June 9, 1782), “I received a letter from Mr. Dana dated at St. Petersburg, April 29th, in which is the following passage: ‘We yesterday received the news that the States General, on the 19th of this month, acknowledged the independence of the United States. This event gave a shock here, and is not well received, as they at least professed to have flattered themselves that mediation would have prevented it, and otherwise brought on a partial peace between Britain and Holland.’”

Mr. Francis Dana, afterwards Chief Justice of Massachusetts, was at this time our accredited Minister to Russia. He remained there about two years asking to be recognized; but Russia refused to receive him or to recognize the independence of our country, and this, too, although nine months before the preliminaries of peace had been signed. At last Dana, in September, 1783, being unsuccessful in his efforts to secure recognition, or to have Russia recognize the independence of our country, obtained permission from Congress to return home.

Some years ago, when Eugene Schuyler was Secretary of Legation at St. Petersburg, he made some investigation for George Bancroft, the historian, and copied and translated some of the diplomatic correspondence under the reign of Catharine II.† At this time Count Osterman was Vice-Chancellor, and Prince Demetri Galitzen was Russian Ambassador at the Hague. Information reached St. Petersburg from the Russian Ambassador that Mr. Adams had been received as United States Minister. The Vice-Chancellor writes to the Ambassador (May 6, 1782):

“Now that their High Mightinesses have proceeded to the formal recognition of Mr. Adams as Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States, I must instruct you that Her Imperial Highness does not wish any demonstration on your part that can lead to the presumption that she approves of this step. You must then abstain from receiving or paying visits either to Mr. Adams, or to any other person accredited from the Colonies which are separating from Great Britain.”

As a further evidence of Catharine’s feeling towards America, I will cite the following: About this time a portrait of Wash-

* Franklin’s Works, edited by Bigelow, vol. 8, p. 89.

† See Bancroft papers, America, Russia and England, vol. 2, Lenox Library.

ington was sent from the Hague in the Russian despatch-bag to Francis Dana, who was then at St. Petersburg, doubtless as a courtesy to Mr. Adams. On the receipt of the bag at the Russian Foreign Office, Count Osterman returned the portrait to Prince Galitzen, the Ambassador at The Hague, with a sharp letter in which he says: "With your despatch came a portrait of Washington to be delivered to one Dana, an American gentleman here, but as this man is not known to Her Imperial Majesty or Her ministry, you are commanded by Her Majesty to return it to the source from which it reached the courier, together with documents accompanying it."

From the same source we learn that, on May 15th, 1780, Sir James Harris, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, writing to Viscount Stormont, the British Secretary of State, after referring to an interview he had with Prince Potemkin, stated that the Prince suggested that the Secretary of State should ask the Empress to mediate between Great Britain and her enemies, and to acquaint her "with the terms on which you wish for an accommodation for America . . . and you may depend not only on her not betraying you, but be almost certain that she will begin by being your mediator, and, if she does not succeed, end by being your ally."* This throws a direct light upon the motives underlying Catharine's desire to become a mediator which has been made much of even by some American historians. John Fiske, in his "American Revolution," says:

"At the beginning of 1778, Sir James Harris, afterwards Earl of Malmesbury, was sent as Ambassador to St. Petersburg, with instructions to leave no stone unturned to secure an offensive and defensive alliance between Russia and Great Britain, in order to offset and neutralize the alliance between France and the United States. Negotiations to this end were kept up as long as the war lasted, but they proved fruitless. While Catharine coquetted and temporized, the Prussian Ambassador had her ear. . . . The weight of France was, of course, thrown into the same scale, and for four years the Russian Court was the scene of brisk and multifarious intrigues. . . . From Prince Potemkin, one of Catharine's lovers, whose favor Harris courted, he learned that nothing short of the cession of Minorca would induce the Empress to enter into this desired alliance. Russia was already taking advantage of the situation to overrun and annex the Crimea; and the maritime outlook, thus acquired, made her eager to secure some naval station on the Mediterranean. Minorca was England's to give. . . . It was not, however, until

* Bancroft papers, vol. 2.

THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA.

1781 that the offer of Minorca was made, and then Catharine had so far acceded to the general combination against England that she could not but refuse it.”*

Before this time, in 1776, as there were very close relations existing between Great Britain and Russia, it was very much feared that Great Britain would be able to draw troops from Russia to serve against the Colonies. That there was ground for this fear is evidenced by a resolution, passed by the Continental Congress (December 30th, 1776), instructing our commissioners in Europe to guard against this contingency. The resolution is as follows:

“That the commissioners be respectively directed to use every means in their power . . . for preventing German, Russian and other foreign troops from being sent to America for hostile purposes.”†

General Sir William Howe wrote from New York (November 30th, 1776) to Lord George Germain that a reinforcement of 15,000 troops was needed, “which I hope may be had from Russia, or from Hanover, or from other German States.”‡

Theodore Lyman, the best of our early writers on our diplomacy, says in reference to Dana’s mission at St. Petersburg, and the refusal of the Empress to recognize him, that the conditions upon which she undertook to receive Dana were more severe than England herself exacted:

“They amounted to this: ‘Strike off seven years of your independence; confess that you owe your independence to the English acknowledgment; annul all acts of sovereignty prior to that time—all Commissioners and Ministers—treaties with France and Holland; and then you will be in a condition to present yourself at the Court of St. Petersburg.’”§

The Continental Congress, in sending Dana to St. Petersburg, hoped to enter into the armed neutrality which Russia was organizing; but, as Dana was absolutely ignored, Congress, in May, 1783, adopted a resolution to the effect that, though it ap-

* John Fiske, “The American Revolution,” New York, 1897, vol. 2, p. 143. W. Eton, in “A Survey of the Turkish Empire” (London, 1798), says: “The Empress, and particularly Potemkin, were very anxious to obtain from His Majesty a cession of the Island of Minorca, which was intended as a station for her fleet, and a rendezvous for the Greeks,” p. 423.

See also Diaries and Correspondence of Sir James Harris, First Earl of Malmesbury, vol. 1, pp. 345, 359, 363, etc.

† American Archives, fourth series, vol. 3, p. 1617.

‡ *Id.*, p. 926.

§ “Diplomacy of the United States,” by Theodore Lyman, Jr., vol. 1

proved the principles of armed neutrality founded on the liberal basis of a maintenance of the rights of neutral nations and of the privileges of commerce, yet they are unwilling at this juncture to become a party to a Confederacy which may hereafter too far complicate the interests of the United States with the politics of Europe. This resolution is in reality the foundation of the policy which has controlled the foreign relations of the United States, and it was subsequently formulated by Washington in the language so familiar to American ears, "Friendly relations with all, entangling alliances with none." As Lyman says, this is the only instance in the history of the country in which the United States volunteered, themselves, to become a party to a league of sovereigns in Europe. While the principles adopted by the Northern Confederacy were exceedingly grateful to the American government, and a proposal to join it was considered an effectual mode of hastening the acknowledgment of independence, in reality it was fortunate that Dana did not succeed in his mission. Francis Wharton, the editor of the "Diplomatic Revolutionary Correspondence," concludes: "That Catharine was resolutely averse to the American cause until after the definitive peace, there is now no question."*

THE WAR OF 1812.

Reference is frequently made to the Russian offer of mediation in 1813 to procure a peace between the United States and Great Britain, and this incident is cited as a proof of Russia's friendly interest in the welfare of our country. It must be remembered, however, that at that time she was closely leagued with England in the sixth celebrated coalition against France. The trade of the Baltic was greatly embarrassed, and the Russian Emperor looked upon this war with great regret as opposing the commercial prosperity of the Russian nation.

M. de Daschkoff, the Russian Minister, said:

"The peace of Russia with England seemed to present this immense advantage to the commerce of nearly all seafaring people, that it freed their relations from that constraint, from that continual vexation to which it had been subjected for many years without interruption."†

* See "Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States," edited, under the direction of Congress, by Francis Wharton (Government Printing-Office), vol. 6, pp. 213, 425; vol. 1, p. 265, etc.

† Lyman's Diplomacy, vol. 1, p. 436.

THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA.

The mediation was declined by Great Britain. Russia was at that time in alliance with England, her interests were to do all in her power to bring about peace for the benefit of her commerce. In view of these facts, it can hardly be claimed that she was actuated by the spirit of friendship for the United States in her desire to become mediator. On the contrary, the real explanation of her friendly interest lies in the fact that, Alexander being at that time in alliance with England to counteract the power of Napoleon and fearing an attack from him, Russia naturally desired that her ally, England, should be freed as speedily as possible from the American war, so that she might give her aid to Russia in repelling Napoleon. This view of Russia's interest was confirmed by Robert Goodloe Harper, United States Senator from Maryland, in his speech in Philadelphia in 1813. He said:

"England and Russia therefore stood alone. England could spare nothing for the direct assistance of Russia except the cooperation of a fleet in the Baltic. Such was the situation of Europe about the moment of attack; and the war which, at the same moment, was declared by the United States against England was so timed, whatever might have been the intention of the authors, as to have the effect of direct and not inconsiderable cooperation with France. . . . This was a great loss to Russia."*

RUSSIA AND THE CIVIL WAR.

Frequent reference is made to Russia's friendly attitude to us during the Civil War, and to her sending several war-ships to the Atlantic and to the Pacific with "Sealed Instructions." Much has been made of this, but, even if such instructions existed, is there any basis for the conclusion that they were for any other purpose than to offset England—in other words, that her actions towards us, even during the Civil War, were but moves made by her upon the chessboard of European diplomacy?

A recent writer, referring to this, says that Prince Gortchakoff, the Chancellor of the Empire, had demanded from the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Paris (1856) the abrogation of the clause of the Treaty which prohibited Russia from maintaining an armed navy in the Black Sea. England and France strongly opposed this. The Chancellor, in reply, sent what came very near to being an ultimatum, and, fearing that this act

* Harper's Speech. Pamphlet—Commemoration of Russian Victories (Philadelphia, 1813).

would be followed by hostilities, despatched a portion of his fleet into neutral waters, so that it would not be bottled up for destruction, as had once been the case when Russia's fleet was in the harbor of Sebastopol. This same writer states that Russia at that time was without an ally in Europe, that Nihilism was rampant, that the nobility was secretly plotting against the life and throne of the Tsar, and that the fleet was sent to the American waters for its own protection, and not for the benefit of the United States.* Be that as it may, why was the knowledge of the existence of such instructions kept from our Government, and why do not the records disclose, as would be natural under such circumstances, what those mysterious "Sealed Instructions" were, and what purpose the ships were to serve? That Russia was our friend during the Civil War, in the same way as almost all other European Powers were our friends, is entirely true. Turkey was among the first of the Powers to show positive friendship for us during the Civil War. She interdicted pirates in the service of the Confederacy from making depredations upon the commerce of our country in the ports of the Turkish Empire. This was recognized by Secretary Seward in his despatch to E. Joy Morris, then our Minister to Turkey; on June 2nd, 1862, he wrote:

"The President received with profound satisfaction the decree of His Majesty the Sultan interdicting the entrance of pirates engaged in depredating upon our commerce in the ports of Turkey. . . . Nor is the proceeding any the less entitled to our grateful acknowledgments because the piratical operations of the insurgents, such as they have been, have already been brought to an end. It will, on the contrary, be to the honor of the Sultan that he took the lead in conceding to the United States rights which it is now expected will soon be conceded by all the other maritime Powers. . . . The Turkish Government has been singularly just and liberal towards us in this emergency."

That the Russian squadron came here in 1863 on a mission to aid the United States is both an afterthought and a myth. If the squadron had come here upon any such mission, would not our Government have placed on record its acknowledgment for this great act of friendship? On the contrary, Russia was very profuse in the expression of her thanks to us for the hospitable reception given to the fleet and its officers.

Cassius M. Clay, our Minister to St. Petersburg, in his despatch

* Pamphlet—"A Brief Review of Russia's Relations with America," by a Russian-American Diplomat (Washington, 1903).

THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA.

to Secretary Seward of November 8th, 1863, said that His Majesty the Emperor was "now absent, but no doubt he would on his return make suitable acknowledgments to our Government of the amicable reception of his subjects at New York": that the Russian officers had "always been gratified to meet those of the American Navy, and they should be most happy, should any ships of war visit Cronstadt, to reciprocate the late courtesies extended to their countrymen."

When the Russian fleet arrived, Gideon Welles, the Secretary of the Navy, wrote to Mr. Stoeckl, the Russian Minister at Washington, a letter which shows that the visit was one of courtesy only:

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *September 23rd, 1863.*

"The Department is much gratified to learn that a squadron of Russian war-vessels is at present off the harbor of New York, with the intention, it is supposed, of visiting that city. The presence in our waters of a squadron belonging to His Imperial Majesty's navy cannot but be a source of pleasure and happiness to our countrymen [*sic*]. I beg that you will make known to the Admiral in command that the facilities of the Brooklyn Navy-yard are at his disposal for any repairs that the vessels of his squadron may need, and that any other required assistance will be gladly extended.

"I avail myself of this occasion to extend through you to the officers of His Majesty's squadron a cordial invitation to visit the Navy-yard. I do not hesitate to say that it will give Rear-Admiral Paulding very great pleasure to show them the vessels and other objects of interest at the Naval station under his command."*

After our Minister met the Emperor, he again reported to Mr. Seward, on August 22nd, 1864, as follows:

"His Majesty told me that he had allowed his officers lately in the United States to call upon me *en masse*, and express their gratitude for the courtesies extended to them in America, all of which was evidently as a national compliment."

France endeavored to bring about a joint mediation, and invited Russia and England to unite with her in the attempt, and Russia refused; but that refusal was given after, and not before, England had refused. Bayard Taylor, who was acting as Chargé at St. Petersburg, in a despatch, dated November 15th, 1862, to Secretary Seward, confirms this. He wrote:

"While I infer from the above that Russia would, to a certain extent, be inclined to take part in a movement which she foresaw to be inevitable

* This letter from the files of the Navy Department was published in the New York "Evening Post," April 18th, 1904.

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

on the part of England and France, rather than permit a coalition between these two Powers from which she should be wholly excluded, the probable refusal of the English Government, announced to-day by telegraph, relieves me from all apprehension of complications that might arise from the proposition. I stated to Prince Gortchakoff, at our recent interview, my belief that England would not accede, and am very glad to find it so soon confirmed."

Further corroboration of this view is contained in a later despatch from Mr. Taylor to Secretary Seward, under date of December 17th, 1862, in which he said :

"Mr. Adams having communicated, in answer to my confidential letter, an encouraging statement of the present attitude of England, I took occasion, in an interview which I had with Prince Gortchakoff last week, to read him some portions of it. This led to a renewed conversation upon American affairs, and it was very soon evident to me that the anxiety which His Excellency had manifested on previous occasions was beginning to subside. He still inquired whether some arrangement with the insurgents which would put an end to the war was not possible."

Henry Clews, in an article in this REVIEW in 1904, published a letter to him from Mr. Gladstone touching upon the attitude of the English Cabinet during our Civil War, which completely refutes the claim that England would have intervened in favor of the Confederacy but for the friendship of Russia towards us. The letter bears date May 30th, 1889, and is as follows :

"As a member of it [the English Cabinet], and now nearly its sole surviving member, I can state it never at any time dealt with the subject of recognizing the Southern States in your great Civil War, except when it learned the proposition of the Emperor Napoleon III, and declined to entertain that proposition without qualification, hesitation, delay, or dissent. In the debate which took place on Mr. Roebuck's proposal for that negotiation, Lord Russell took no part, and could take none, as he was a member of the House of Lords. I spoke for the Cabinet. You will, I am sure, be glad to learn that there is no foundation for a charge which, had it been true, might have aided in keeping alive angry sentiments happily gone by."

THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE UNITED STATES FOR RUSSIA DURING THE POLISH INSURRECTION.

But there is another side to this story, which, to use a common phrase, puts the boot on the other leg.

In the beginning of 1863, affairs in Russia were in a very precarious state. An insurrection in Poland had broken out to such a degree that considerable agitation was felt in all Europe. The

THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA.

French Minister of Foreign Affairs invited Great Britain, and subsequently the United States, to join with France in bringing about the cessation of hostilities.

In accordance with our policy of strict neutrality and of not mixing with the affairs of European States, Mr. Seward gave a courteous declination to this invitation. This declination produced such satisfaction in Russia that Prince Gortchakoff published his reply to our Minister in the Russian press. I will quote a few passages therefrom :

“ May 22nd, 1863—I lost no time in laying before the Emperor, my august master, the despatch which you have communicated to me by order of your Government, and which contains the answer of Mr. Seward to Mr. Dayton, relative to the recent application of the French Government upon the subject of events in the Kingdom of Poland. His Majesty the Emperor has been sensibly moved by the sentiments of confidence which the Government of the United States places in his views and designs in regard to the general well-being of his Empire. Such manifestations must strengthen the bonds of mutual sympathy which unite the two countries, and constitute a consummation which too much accords with the aspirations of the Emperor His Majesty not to look upon it with pleasure.”

The insurrection in Poland at that time was occupying much more of the attention of the Cabinets of Europe, including Russia, than our Civil War. Our Minister in Paris, Mr. Dayton, in his despatch to Mr. Seward of February 23rd, 1863, reports :

“ The insurrection of Poland has driven American affairs out of view for the moment. A disturbance on the Continent, especially in Central Europe, is so near at hand, and touches the interests of so many of the crowned heads of these countries, that distant events fall out of sight until these more immediate troubles are settled.”

Minister Clay, in his despatch of November 8th, 1863, says :

“ The Russian reception in American waters is the subject of conversation in all circles; and the gentry and the common people seem alike to understand and feel the friendly demonstration made at this time, when France, England and Austria are attempting, under the pretence of national justice, to put them under the ban of Christendom for defending the integrity of their Empire.”*

THE ALASKAN PURCHASE.

It has frequently been claimed by Russia that her sale to us of Alaska was made out of friendship for this country. That is another myth.

* Foreign Relations, 1863, MS. Archives, Department of State.

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

Charles Sumner, who was chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Senate when the Alaska treaty came up for ratification, in his great speech in support of the treaty, under the heading "Reasons for Cession by Russia," said:

"Turning from the question of title which time and testimony have already settled, I meet the inquiry, Why does Russia part with possessions associated with the reign of her greatest ruler and filling an important chapter of geographical history? Here I am without information not open to others.

"But I do not forget that the First Napoleon, in parting with Louisiana, was controlled by three several considerations. First, he needed the purchase-money for his treasury. Secondly, he was unwilling to leave this distant unguarded territory a prey to Great Britain, in the event of hostilities, which seemed at hand. And, thirdly, he was glad, according to his own remarkable language, 'to establish forever the power of the United States, and give to England a maritime rival that would sooner or later humble her pride.'

"Such is the record of history. Perhaps a similar record may be made hereafter with regard to the present cession. There is reason to imagine that Russia, with all her great empire, is financially poor, so that these few millions may not be unimportant to her. . . . It will be for her advantage not to hold outlying possessions from which thus far she has obtained no income commensurate with the possible expense for her protection."

Sumner, the statesman and the author of "Prophetic Voices Concerning America," was certainly correct and almost prophetic in this instance, for, with the acquisition of Alaska, the United States did undoubtedly purchase serious and threatening boundary and fishery complications with Great Britain, which were only recently happily settled by arbitration.

RUSSIA AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

It will be remembered that Russia was the dominant Power in the so-called "Holy Alliance," whose purpose was to suppress all forms of popular uprisings, to crush the spirit of liberty in the Central and South American Republics, and ultimately, as a logical consequence, to dominate a large part, if not the whole, of the American Continent.

Russia's relations to the Monroe Doctrine were not confined to her primacy in the "Holy Alliance." In the autumn of 1818, J. B. Provost, the American Commissioner who had been sent out by the President to receive the formal delivery of Astoria, stopped

on his return at the port of Monterey, in California, and while there prepared the report of his mission. In this report he informed the President of an incident he regarded as most serious—which was that, until 1816, the Russians had no settlement south of the fifty-fifth degree. But in that year, very probably because of Humboldt's glowing description of that region, she had established two colonies, one at Atooi in the Sandwich Islands, and the other on the coast of California, a few leagues from San Francisco.

In February, 1822, the Russian Minister at Washington, Chevalier Pierre de Politica, placed in the hands of the Secretary of State an edict of the Emperor Alexander to the effect that all rights of commerce, industry and fishing on the Northwest coast of America, from Behring Straits to the fifty-first degree, were exclusively granted to Russian subjects. Foreign vessels were, therefore, not only not to land on the coast and islands, but not even to come within one hundred Italian miles. The subject was renewed by Politica's successor, Baron de Tuyl; and, one day in July, 1823, when he called at the State Department, Adams announced to him "that we should contest the right of Russia to any territorial establishment on this continent, and that we should assume distinctly the principle that the American continents are no longer subjects for any European colonial establishments."

According to McMaster, from whose excellent chapter on the Monroe Doctrine I have drawn largely in this statement, when the time came for Monroe to write his annual message to Congress, there were three distinct matters that required the President's serious attention: "the attempt of Russia to colonize in California and her selection of the fifty-first degree of north latitude as the southern boundary of Alaska; the threatened intervention of the Holy Alliance in the affairs of South-American Republics; and the proposition of Canning for a joint declaration against them."* The Cabinet held meeting after meeting to discuss these matters; they had before them the opinions of the two living ex-Presidents, Jefferson and Madison. What was done Adams himself best describes:

"I remarked that the communications recently received from the Russian Minister, Baron de Tuyl, afforded, I thought, a very suitable

* "With the Fathers," by John Bach McMaster, pp. 1-54.

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

and convenient opportunity for us to take our stand against the Holy Alliance, and at the same time to decline the overture of Great Britain. It would be more candid, as well as more dignified, to avow our principles explicitly to Russia and France, than to come in as a cockboat in the wake of the British man-of-war. This idea was acquiesced in on all sides."

It follows as a conclusion that such reasons for gratitude as we may have to Russia are not for her friendly, but for her hostile, attitude towards us, in that these important incidents were mainly the cause of our formulating and announcing to the world our far-seeing continental policy.

CONCLUSION.

I have endeavored to present briefly the results of a careful examination of all accessible authentic and reliable data bearing upon the relations of the two countries, from the reign of Empress Catharine II to the present time. The inferences and conclusions from these facts are clear, that, with the exception of Russia's hostile or unfriendly attitude during the earlier years of our history, when the United States was struggling for recognition as an independent nation, and the "Holy Alliance" incident, the relations between Russia and the United States have been uniformly normal and friendly; each nation, as against the other, on all occasions and during periods of war, has strictly observed its neutral obligations, as was incumbent upon it under the laws of nations between friendly Powers. To infer that the United States is under obligations of gratitude to Russia for any special acts of friendship shown, other than such as the laws of neutrality have imposed, is to substitute a myth and the fulsome language of ceremonial functions for historical facts.

OSCAR S. STRAUS.

